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Bayada Nurses Now Established in Palm Beach

With the number of seniors in Florida who need medical attention or personal care, why do you suppose Bayada Nurses, which opened its first office in Philadelphia in 1975 and now has more than 190 offices in 18 states, waited so long to establish a location in Palm Beach? Founder and President Mark Baiada has a simple answer: "We usually open locations based on people, not the need in the community; because the need seems to be everywhere."

The "people" he is referring to are not the ones who need assistance, but rather the directors and managers and staff who uphold the quality of care that is associated with Bayada. Bayada Nurses' mission is to help people lead a safe home life

with comfort, independence and dignity. Bayada started by providing personal care, light housekeeping, etc., to seniors, and now, according to Baiada, "We've expanded—one-third of our work is high-tech pediatrics. We bring the neo-natal intensive care unit into the home. We do skilled Medicare, a high degree of therapy, long-term chronic care. People with spinal cord needs, ALS, brain injuries. I think we offer one of the most comprehensive range of services of all the providers of home health care."

In looking first for quality directors to open offices, some might think that Baiada does things a little backwards, but he knows it's the right way—the Bayada Way. "Many times when you see an organizational chart, there's a person at the top; but in our case, our values are at the top—compassion, excellence, reliability. The Bayada Way is a written statement. It says that our vision is to help millions of people worldwide and leave a lasting legacy. So we'll still be here in 100 years serving our communities, and we'll be the world's most trusted team of home health care professionals."

✖ To establish and maintain that goal you need good people in place, and Baiada believes he found that person in Michael Davis to open the Palm Beach office. Davis has worked for a decade in the health care industry, including in hospital administration, but he admitted, "I wanted a change. When I found Bayada last year, they were looking to do more in Florida. So we studied the market and found that Palm Beach was the best place demographically. And because I had worked in hospital administration in Palm Beach and South Florida, it seemed like a perfect fit."

"We met Mike and picked Mike, not the area," Baiada said. "We're looking for really quality people, and I've done that over and over. If you try it the other way—pick the place and then try to find somebody—it doesn't necessarily work."

One of the things that attracted Davis was Bayada's mission statement. "I think Bayada is not just about making money, it's really about making a difference—a difference in the lives of our clients and in the lives of our staff. What I

found in Bayada was totally different from what I had found working for several different health care organizations in the past; I've not found in any of those environments what I've found here. And I think it's the consistent dedication to the mission of making the client and the employee the first priority."

Since receiving approval last December to open the office, Davis has been busy setting up and making arrangements, with hiring staff one of the "easier" responsibilities. "Last year we placed an exploratory ad, advertising home care positions in South Florida. The response was explosive," Davis said. "We had more people than we could handle at the time."

Some of the replies were from nurses who had previously been with Bayada, like one who worked for the New Jersey office for a number of years, but moved to South Florida in 2000. She had accepted a job with another facility, but when she saw the ad for Bayada, wanted to come back.

Another nurse knew of Bayada from the Philadelphia area and thought, that's a name I can trust, it's a quality company, I'd like to work with them. Yet another nurse transferred from Atlanta. "They know the expectations of the company, they know what the company name means and how important it is to provide good service to our clients," Davis said.

So in its way, Bayada benefits both sides. As Baiada said, "Just as we're looking for people who need help, and they're looking for a really good agency to help them. We always want to be their best choice."

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